

## ROLE OF SCHOOL HEAD IN FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN MCD SCHOOLS OF DELHI

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**Received: 19 Aug 2018**

**Accepted: 30 Aug 2018**

**Published: 06 Sep 2018**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A School Development Plan (SDP) is the product of an on-going process where the principal, in consultation with key stakeholders, reviews the effectiveness of the whole range of educational experiences provided for students in the school and prepares a vision and plan for continuous improvement in the short and long term future (ANTRIEP, 2011). The definition suggests that it is a cyclical process, through which the head, in consultation with others, reviews the current needs of the school, envisions a better future, establish priorities for development and evaluates the implementation leading to a further review and a new set of priorities. In India, according to the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009, every Government or Government-aided School is supposed to prepare a mandatory School Development Plan as one of the Functions of School Management Committee. The rationale behind the addition of School Development Plan in the RTE Act is its holistic view. According to SSA-Framework for Implementation of Right to Education Act (2011) "It is a Master Plan and Base Document for school's educational as well as infrastructure work along with its development in phases. It implies that it comprises of both the educational and infrastructure aspect of school and is a whole School Development Plan". The SDP is visualized as a comprehensive plan focusing on all aspects of School e.g. Protection of children's rights, Infrastructure, Teacher availability, Classroom transaction and Child assessments, Inclusiveness, etc. Hence, School Development plan plays an important role in school improvement.*

*School head plays an Important role in School functioning. In Indian Context, he/she plays a wide variety of roles in School. They look after Academic issues, Administrative tasks, Managerial duties (Akhtar, 2000; Govinda, 2002; Seetharaman, 2001). They also play an important role in the formulation and implementation of school programs (Voorhis and Sheldon, 2004; Berua, 2001). He/she prepares a School Development Plan with SMC and Implement it with the help of Colleagues. Therefore, they can also play important role in formulation and implementation of School Development Plan, which in turn leads to School Improvement. Hence, the process of formulation and implementation of School Development Plan was explored studying the role of School head in the whole process. The purpose of the study was to explore the process of formulation and implementation of School Development Plan in schools to find out how much policy directives are transformed into school practices. Also, the role played by the school head in the whole process.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Right to Education, School Development Plan, MCD Schools, Role of School Head*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A school head is an Educational Leader and Manager of a school, and is therefore, responsible for the performance of all the people in the school i.e. both staff and learners. He is the one who is responsible for the successful functioning of the school. Educators, researchers, and communities interested in improving the quality of schools have long recognized the principal as a critical force in creating and maintaining successful schools (Voorhis and Sheldon, 2004). School head helps in shaping a vision of academic success for all students. Principals play a major role in developing a "Professional community" of teachers who guide one another in improving instruction. According to Gene (2003), a high-performing principal understands which school and classroom practices improve student achievement; Knows how to work with teachers and community to bring about positive change; supports teachers in carrying out instructional practices that help all students succeed, and can prepare accomplished teachers to become principals.

School leaders are called upon to play multiple roles. He/she is expected to be an administrator, academic, personnel, and financial manager. All these aspects are not mutually exclusive of each other and thus there exist a lot of overlapping in their roles and responsibilities. CABE Committee on Universalization of Secondary education (2005) also highlights that head of the schools hold the key to quality management and self-renewal of schools, it also points that managing and leading schools is a specialized job and not merely an automatic extension of activities of a teacher. Most of the head teachers in Indian school also teach in the classrooms. Although inter-state and inter-level variations exist in the teaching load of head teachers. The teaching load of the head teacher at the lower levels of education is higher as compared to higher education.

In the recent times, however, there have been more interest and discussions on framing a role and set of uniform responsibilities for principals; these are primarily necessitated by the RTE Act. The RTE Act (2009) mandated the formation and operation of the school management committee. As the local parents and other members of the public get more and more involved in the management of schools, principals need to exercise a participatory form of governance and minimize their unilateral decision making and simple monitoring for compliance with rules and regulations. A judicious balancing act must be performed by the principal in order to overcome systemic limitations. Despite less than optimal conditions, the principal needs to deliver quality and sustain the overall effectiveness of the school's education while continuing to meet the growing demand for continuous societal changes.

Right to Education Act (RTE), is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. According to this act "Every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of elementary education."

RTE Act 2009 provides for constitution and functions of a School Management Committee in certain categories of schools. The setting up of such Committees has been a recommendation of nearly all previous education commissions and policies. The reason is that if the community has to be involved in the vast school system of the country, and if the parents are to be recognized as primary stakeholders in the education of their children, they must be involved in a meaningful manner in the monitoring and management of schools. One of the functions of the school management committee is to prepare and recommend a school development plan.

### **1.1. School Development Plan (SDP)**

The school development plan (SDP) is the school's strategic plan for improvement. It sets out the actions a school will take to improve learner outcomes. An SDP is informed by the regular self-evaluation a school undertakes of its own performance and contextual data, and contain the school's improvement priorities together with short- and longer-term targets.

The SDP set out how the school will achieve its targets, in relation to its priorities, and how it will use the resources it has available, including funding. It also set out how the school intends to develop its staff (including those temporarily placed at the school) in order to meet the school's priorities and targets. In setting out the overall plan for improvement for the three years ahead, the SDP contain sufficient detail to enable actions to address the priorities for the current school year to be identified and implemented, along with high-level priorities and targets for years two and three. It is a live document that should be regularly refreshed to reflect the school's progress in meeting its priorities, taking account of the latest performance data. The School development plan must reflect the vision of a school and ways to achieve it. „Vision statement“ of a school is defined as the description of what a school would like to achieve or accomplish in the long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.

The Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009, Section 22 has incorporated the school Development plan as one of the important function of the School Management Committee. It provides for the preparation of a School Development Plan (SDP) by the School Management Committee. The SDP is visualized as a comprehensive plan focusing on all aspects of school e.g. protection of children's rights, infrastructure, teacher availability, classroom transaction and child assessments, inclusiveness, etc.

According to SSA-framework for implementation (2011), school development plan is called Whole School Development Plan (WSDP) which is a combination of an educational plan that guides the infrastructure plan and its effective usage in the learning processes. Whole School Development Plan has to reflect the vision of a school and ways to achieve it. It is a master plan and base document for school's educational as well as infrastructure work along with its development in phases. Its planning is seen as an evolving process rather than one-time activity.

At the National level, the vision of School Development Plan is to develop each school's built-environment as an eco-system for learning. The school is envisioned as inclusive and pedagogically rich, sustainable ecosystem, safe and secure from hazards, incorporating elements of green architecture, optimum resource-utilization through culturally and environmentally sustainable practices.

### **1.2. Delhi Right to Education (RTE) Rules, 2011**

According to RTE Rules for Delhi (2011), Every Government and the Government-aided school must have a School Management Committee (SMC) having not less than 16 members. Before the RTE Act came into existence, SMCs were known by the names of VKS (VidyalayaKalyanSamiti) and PTA (Parents Teacher Association) in Delhi.

### 1.2.1. School Management Committee based on Delhi RTE Rules (2011)

- A School Management Committee (hereafter in this rule referred to as the said committee) having not less than 16 members shall be constituted in every school, other than an unaided school, within six months of the coming into force of these rules and reconstituted every two years:
- Provided that fifty percent of the members of this committee shall be women.
- Provided further that there shall be a proportionate representation of parents/guardians of children belonging to disadvantaged group and weaker sections.
- Provided also that the committee's role would be limited to elementary education level.
- Seventy-five percent of the strength of the School Management Committee shall be from amongst parents or guardians of children.
- The remaining twenty five-percent of the strength of the School Management Committee shall be from amongst the following persons, namely:-
- One member of the committee shall be an elected representative of the local authority;
- Head of the school shall be the member of the committee;
- One member of the committee shall be a teacher of the school to be decided by the teachers of school;
- One member shall be a social worker involved in the field of education.
- The following teachers of a school shall be included in the School Management Committee as the special invitee.
- One social science teacher.
- One science teacher.
- One mathematics teacher.
- To manage its affairs, the School Principal shall be the ex-officio Chairperson of the School Management Committee. Vice Chairperson shall be from among the parent members. The member teacher of the committee shall act as the convener.
- The said Committee shall meet at least once in two months and the minutes and decisions of the meetings shall be properly recorded and made available to the public.
- The said Committee shall, in addition to the functions specified in clauses (a) to (d) of subsection (2) of section 21 of the Act, perform the following functions, namely:-
- Communicate in simple and creative ways to the population in the neighborhood of the school, the right of the child as enunciated in the Act; as also the duties of the Government, Local Authority, school, parents, and guardian;
- Ensure the implementation of clauses (a) and (e) of section 24 and section 28 of the Act;

- Monitor that teachers are not burdened with non-academic duties other than those specified in section 27 of the Act;
- Ensure the enrolment and continued attendance of all the children from the neighborhood in the school;
- Monitor the maintenance of the norms and standards specified in the Schedule;
- Bring to the notice of the Government or local authority as the case may be any deviation from the rights of the child, in particular, mental and physical harassment of children, denial of admission, and timely provision of free entitlements as per section 3(2) of the Act;
- Identify the needs, prepare a plan, and monitor the implementation of the provisions of section 4 of the Act;
- Monitor the identification and enrolment of, and facilities for the education of children with disabilities and ensure their participation in, and completion of elementary education;
- Monitor the implementation of the mid-day meal in the school.
- Money if received by the said committee for the discharge of functions under the Act shall be kept in a separate account, to be audited annually.
- The accounts referred to in sub-rule (8) should be signed by the Chairperson/Vice Chairperson and Convener of the School Management Committee and made available to the authority releasing the fund within one month of their preparation.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The present study was based on a field study in the central district of Delhi. The information was collected from primary sources of data. Data were collected from 20 MCD schools of Delhi. Data sets collected were analyzed based on qualitative and quantitative information drawn from the schools.

There is the total of 1750 MCD schools in Delhi. All the MCD school heads of Delhi constitute as the population of the study. Out of the total population, City zone of North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) was selected as the sample of the study. There are 80 MCD schools in City zone (NDMC). The sample of the study consisted of MCD School Heads from City Zone of NDMC. The systematic Random sampling method was used to select 20 schools as a sample for the study.

The various tools used in the study were:

### **2.1. Interview Schedule**

Personal unstructured interviews were taken of the 20 School Heads to study the process of formulation and implementation of the school development plan and the issues and challenges faced by them in the whole process.

### **2.2. Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was used as a tool to understand the 20 school Head's roles and responsibilities in the formulation and implementation of the school development plan. The wide variety of roles under study was that of an Initiator,

Decision-maker, Resource allocator, Communicator, Disseminator, Disturbance-handler, Leader and Pro-active role.

### 2.3. School Basic Information

A school-based Performa was developed to get the profiles of MCD schools. This Performa gave the overall picture of MCD schools in terms of students, teachers, physical infrastructure, sports and teaching equipment etc.

### 2.4. Shadowing

Seven out of the 20 school heads were shadowed for three days each, to observe their role and responsibilities in SDP as well as overall school functioning.

### 2.5. Analysis of Documents

Past SDPs and the related documents/orders were also analyzed to understand the role of school head in school functioning as well as the functioning of SMCs in the eyes of government authority.

### 2.6. Focus group discussions (FGDs)

Focus Group Discussions with the SMC members were done to understand the role of school and school head in the process of formulation and implementation of the school development plan. Focus Group Discussions took place with all the SMC members of selected seven schools excluding school head. FGDs helped to study the pro-active role of school head and validate the information acquired through different tools.

Data were analyzed qualitatively using two approaches: Typological and Content analysis.

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Formulation of School Development Plan in MCD Schools of Delhi

According to Delhi RTE Rules (2011), all schools whether government or government aided, primary or upper primary is supposed to follow the above guidelines to constitute SMC and SDP but in the present study on MCD schools the school practices were found to be very different. The basic findings related to SDP in MCD schools of Delhi are as follows:

In MCD schools there is no term like SDP in use. Even school heads and the school staff are not aware of this term. When they were told that it is a part of RTE Act and is to be formulated and implemented in all government and government-aided schools, the school heads said; "SDP to senior secondary schools keliyehai, humarehaannhihota". Many of them have even not seen or read the RTE Act 2009. This shows they do not have proper understanding of the RTE Act and to which level it is applicable. They just simply call it "Plan" or "Development work" or "Development needs". There is no separate plan as SDP. Whatever issues or needs discussed in SMC meetings collectively constitute a plan/SDP in MCD schools.

SDPs were mandated in government schools in 2011 and till 2016 4-5 plans are formulated in the majority of MCD schools. In few schools, 6-8 plans have been formulated till now. It takes a week time to formulate a plan. There is no fixed format of this plan. Delhi RTE Rules 2011 has proposed few provisions on which SDP should be based but no such thing is followed. Their plan consists of needs and priorities of the school which can be anything. It was found that the aim almost remains the same that is school development and school improvement. The process of formation of

“Need-based plan” takes a week time. It starts with a discussion between school staff and the school head. They all sit together and discuss the school needs as the immediate needs and priorities of the school. After that, SMC members (parents, elected representative, social worker) are called to school by the school head. The issues discussed with the school teachers and staffs is again put forward in front of parents and community members and they are shown the condition of material/objects/infrastructure which urgently needs maintenance and repair so that they can understand the issues and give their full cooperation. Then, on the day of the meeting when all members assembled together in the school, the approval of all the members is taken.

The efforts to solve the issues are discussed and finally, the signatures of all the members on the minutes of the meeting are taken. Fourteen schools (70 percent) out of the twenty follow this procedure of formulation of the plan.

In six schools (30 percent) all the decisions are taken with the school staff only not involving any parents and community members. Their participation is a formality which only involves attending the meeting and signing the minutes of the meeting. School heads of these schools feel that the community is not capable of constructively participating in the school functioning.

In one school, non-SMC parents were also indirectly involved in the process by taking their suggestions and ideas from time to time for school development.

### **3.2. Implementation of Plan in the MCD Schools of Delhi**

Once the proposed issues get the approval of all the SMC members, the plan is ready to be implemented. The implementation mainly consists of the implementation of the remedial efforts discussed and finalized in the previous meeting. If the issues need local people/helper the help of parents is taken to call such people to school. In the implementation, parent and community members play an important role. In issues other than the maintenance and repairing work, the plan is implemented in another way, like if the issue of student absenteeism is discussed then its implementation requires the awareness of parents, parents motivation of their children and all the efforts which can reduce the student absenteeism. In the issues related to physical infrastructure, once the plan is implemented, another meeting is scheduled in which parents are informed about the completion of tasks and expenditure bills are shown so that they know how much funds are used in getting the work done. Usually, there is a time gap of 2-3 months between the two meetings. In other issues which do not require funds, the success of the efforts is discussed in the second meeting.

### **3.3 Role of School Head in the Formulation of Plan**

MCD school heads play the role of an initiator, manager, decision-maker, disseminator communicator, disturbance handler and leader in the process of formulation of the plan.

- As an Initiator, they are the ones who first take the initiative to start the process of formulation of a plan. They initiate discussions with the staff and community regarding the planning process, like regarding what to be included and not to be included in the plan.
- As a Decision-Maker, they decide the day of the meeting. Few school heads keep the meeting according to the convenience of community representatives. They observe and decide the priorities of the school. They decide what to be included and not to be included in the plan and the funding for various provisions of the plan.



- As a Communicator, they communicate their suggestions and ideas to the staff and community and vice versa. Whatever to be communicated in meetings is communicated by them. The exchange of thoughts paved a way for new suggestions. They also communicate the final school plan to parents in SMC meetings.
- As a Disseminator, they provide information regarding class wise enrolment to parents and community members. They always provide information regarding the number of teachers in school and how many are further required for the parents and community members. In case of physical infrastructure, they show the condition of the object/equipment/school personally to the members.
- As a Disturbance Handler, they take care that there is no conflict among the SMC members or within the school staff. Majority of school heads feel that “Generally nothing like this happens, because members do not cross-question, they support what we say”.
- As a Leader, they constantly manage the whole process. They motivate parents to get engaged with the school. They tell them the importance of their participation in school development. School heads always remain in touch with the parents before initiating the formulation process too like they tell them about the new schemes of government time to time. They always give value to the advice and suggestions of the parents.

#### **3.4. Responsibilities of School Head in the Formulation of Plan**

School head is a responsible figure in the functioning of the school. He/she is responsible for every work whether it is related to students, teaching, staff-related or administrative work. The various responsibilities of school head in the formulation process are:

- To initiate the process
- To organize SMC meeting
- To decide the day of the meeting
- To initiate discussions with the staff, have to ask teachers what they think is urgently required by the school, ask for suggestions and ideas
- Communicate with community members and get their ideas for school development
- Call parents to school to show and discuss issues
- To decide between the need and the priority
- To get the approval of all the SMC members on proposed issues
- Manage the whole process

#### **3.5. Role of School Head in the Implementation of Plan**

As school heads play important roles in the formulation of the plan, they also play key roles in its implementation. They play the role of a decision-maker, resource allocator, leader, communicator, disseminator in the implementation of the plan.



- In the implementation of the plan, the role of a school head as an Effective Leader is necessary for the success of the plan because implementation level requires more participation and cooperation of school and community. There is a distribution of task. Hence, School head provides continuous motivation to the members. They monitor that everyone is working on the assigned task and check the progress of work. They encourage even the small efforts of the members which motivated them to work much better.

When these school heads were asked what should be the characteristics of a team leader, all of them feel that he/she must be resourceful and knowledgeable. This can be due to the resource crunch and lack of proper information transfer from higher authority to them. Other major characteristics which should be present in a team leader according to the school heads are:

- Team leader must be active
- Should have a problem-solving capacity
- Must be cooperative
- Must be democratic
- He/ she must be a role model
- As a Decision-maker and Resource allocator, they assure maximum utilization of funds and allocate funds for the various activities. All the funds are within their control so they finally decide how much money will be used in which task.
- As a Disseminator, they provide information on the allocation of funds in implementation work to all the members in SMC meetings. They also show the receipts of the purchase/work done to the members.
- They act as a link between school and community and always remain in communication with school staff and the community. They contact local people to get the work done in school and divide the work between school and community.

### **3.7. Responsibilities of School Head in Implementation of Plan**

Once the school head gets the approval of all the SMC members on the issues proposed, next responsibility of school head is to implement it. The responsibilities increased while implementing the plan.

The various responsibilities of the school head in the implementation process are:

- They have to contact local helpers to get the work done in school
- Have to look after the availability of funds and assure maximum utilization of funds
- Decide the funds
- Monitor that everyone is doing the assigned task
- Provide continuous motivation and guidance to SMC members
- To get the Sign of the SMC members on expenditure receipts

- Contact government officials for funds (If there is a lack of funds)

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded from the major findings that MCD schools do not follow RTE guidelines for Delhi for the preparation of school development plan. There is a wide gap between the policy and school practices in terms of school development plan. There is no such term called „school development plan“ in use in MCD schools. They think the school development plan is for senior secondary schools not for primary and elementary schools. This can be attributed to the improper understanding of the RTE act by them. Special training programme may urgently be taken on preparing school development plan (SDP) for SMC members as SDP have not prepared by so many schools till now (Bhattacharya and Mohalik, 2015). The level of awareness of trained school teachers on RTE provisions was poor, there was no significant difference in the level of awareness in relation to RTE act among the male and female trained teachers (Thakur, 2014; Ramachandran and Subramonian, 2015; Kumar, 2014). In MCD schools, they do not have a school development plan but a “Need-based plan” which they simply called a „Plan“, „Development needs“ or „Development work“. It is a one-time plan based on the immediate needs of the school. The RTE based school development plan is visualized as a comprehensive plan focusing on all aspects of school e.g. protection of children’s rights, infrastructure, teacher availability, classroom transaction and child assessments, inclusiveness, etc. but the need-based plan of MCD does not have any vision. In MCD schools of Delhi, the majority of plans discussed physical infrastructure only. The issues related to protection of children’s rights, teacher availability, classroom transaction, child assessments and inclusiveness are least discussed. The whole process of formulation and implementation of MCD school plan occurs in two SMC consecutive SMC meetings. In the first meeting the plan is formulated, then implemented and in the second meeting, the expenditure in its implementation etc. is disseminated to the SMC members.

A major finding was, even though MCD school heads do not have a proper understanding of school development plan but the school management committee is present in each school according to the policy directives. The recent literature suggested that SMCs are not present in schools (Menon, 1998; Thapa, 2012; comSS, 2011). Even though the role of an MCD school head is not properly defined according to the policy and government authority but still, school heads play important roles in the management of school management committee and formulation and implementation of MCD schools need-based plan. They have wide responsibilities in the process of preparation and implementation of Plan. They play a wide variety of roles from being an administrator to a teacher, leader, and manager. These are the major roles which they play for the successful functioning of their schools. Apart from these major roles, there are sub-roles played by the school heads in their schools like that of a Decision-maker, Resource allocator, Communicator, disseminator (Mintzberg, 1990). These roles change with the condition and need. For example, when it comes to maintaining peace and discipline in the school they act as disturbance handler when it comes to looking after the issue of student absenteeism, they act as the problem solver.

But playing the roles as a head of the school is not an easy task. MCD school heads face issues and challenges in the formulation and implementation of their plan such as The issues faced by parent members are their low cooperation, absence from SMC meetings and non-interest in school functioning. Similarly, community members do not attend meetings regularly. They remain as an audience and just fulfill the formality of attending meetings. The challenges faced by the school head in an implementation of the plan are a shortage of funds, irregularity of funds and establishing relations

with parent members.. Dealing with a community is not an easy task and if the participating members do not cooperate and contribute then it becomes more difficult.

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